



A Division of The Mayor's Office of Community Partnerships
CITY OF BOSTON THOMAS M. MENINO, MAYOR

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What do you mean by grassroots?

SNYF provides funds to support projects that are developed and implemented at the community level. Projects may be developed by a community-based organization or an group of community members. One of our priorities is to fund projects that include community members during the planning stage and in the operation of the project.

Our project was not developed by a grassroots organization. Is it still eligible for funding?

While priority is given to grassroots projects, all projects that engage Boston youth are eligible to apply, even projects developed by a large organization. Sometimes an organization partners with a particular community when developing a project; for example, the Boston Symphony Orchestra could partner with the Cape Verdean community to deliver a program of ethnic music. Or an organization may implement a project at the community level. For example, the Boston Medical Center could deliver adolescent mental health services in the East Boston area to recently arrived African immigrants who are trauma victims.

This project was piloted last year. Is it still considered new?

Yes. Generally, SNYF considers any project less than three-years-old to be new. New projects are given priority when reviewing proposals for funding. However, SNYF will generally not fund the same project for more than five years.

Our program is over ten-years-old. Can we apply for funding to support this program?

We encourage you to think about new projects that would enhance your program. For example, you might already run a successful math tutoring program. Perhaps there is a new curriculum you would like to introduce or a new age group or a group of youth from a different neighborhood you would like to serve? This “new” component should be the focus your proposal and will be considered a “new” project.

Whatever the project, you should be able to state precisely how SNYF funding will enhance your ability to address one of the priority objectives listed on pages three and four of the guidelines.

We have found that one of the primary barriers for achievement among youth is the literacy of parents. We are developing a literacy program to encourage parents to read to their children. Is this program appropriate for SNYF funding?

No. While this program addresses two SNYF priorities—it could improve academic achievement and it could promote increased parental involvement with their children—to be eligible for SNYF funding programs must directly engage youth.

Our project budget is greater than \$7,000. When requesting funding from SNYF, are there certain expenses that SNYF is more likely to cover than others?

Question 15 of the application describes the types of expenses that SNYF cannot support. Other than this, there are no restrictions on the types of items SNYF will support.

However, when requesting personnel costs, SNYF will only support personnel who are directly involved in the proposed project and who directly engage youth. Hence, program directors who do not actually work with youth will not be eligible for SNYF support. Executive Directors who may participate in the development of a project and who may provide support for a project, but who do not directly work with youth, are not eligible. The roles of any personnel for which you are requesting funding should be clearly stated within the project narrative. In no circumstances will SNYF support the cost of a grant writer, development officer, or financial officer unless these individuals also work directly with youth in the program.

Furthermore, SNYF does not support the ongoing operating expenses of an agency. Thus, personnel expenses should be directed toward new positions, increases in the full-time equivalence (FTE) of a position due to an expansion of a program, or salary increases due to increased responsibilities.

When completing the budget, do we only need to indicate the expenses that will be supported by SNYF?

When completing the budget form, you should indicate the entire budget for the project, including expenses that will be covered by other sources or from your operating budget. Failure to indicate the entire budget for the project may make it impossible for the SNYF committee to assess the impact of SNYF funding on your project.

When thinking about the project budget, include all personnel who are involved in the project. What are all the supplies and materials associated with the project, including photocopying, mailings, faxing, etc.?

When submitting your budget, however, you are not required to include the budget for your entire organization or the larger program under which this project might fall.

In the application, we must indicate which neighborhoods we serve. Is there a target for the number of projects that will be funded in each neighborhood?

No. Applicants are competing with all other applicants considered during each cycle of SNYF funding. However, we do consider the need for services within each neighborhood when evaluating programs for funding, and we do believe that there is a need for services across the entire city.

We are asked how many youth will be served by our project. Will our application be more competitive if we serve more youth?

In reviewing proposals, we do wish to maximize the impact of SNYF funds. However, we do not sacrifice quality for quantity. We are interested in the quality of your interactions with youth and the extent to which youth will benefit from your program. Some projects may reasonably not be able to serve a larger number of youth, because the target population may require very specialized programming. Other projects, however, maybe be able to serve a greater number of youth. In evaluating your proposal, we will balance the number of youth you intend to serve with the project that you propose.

Is there any way for me to find out what programs were funded in previous years?

Yes. Each year, SNYF publishes an Annual Report which lists all of the programs funded that year. We are happy to provide you with a copy of our Annual Report. The 2000 report is the most recent currently available.

In reviewing the SNYF Annual Report, I noticed that most of the programs are for teens and older children. Is there a preference for one age group over another?

No. In the past we have received many more applications for programs which serve teens and older children. However, programs which serve youth from age five to 18 are eligible.

What happens if our application is incomplete? Will we be notified so that we can submit missing materials before the committee reviews our application?

No. Once an application is submitted, it cannot be altered in any way. For this reason, we encourage applicants to use the Check List provided in your application package.

All applicants will be notified of their status after the review process has been completed and the award decisions have been made.

If I receive an award, do I simply receive a check from the city? Do I have to do anything else?

There are several things that we ask you to do as a SNYF recipient.

First, you are required to attend an award ceremony as well as a training on the city's reporting guidelines. This training will explain to you what is required in the midterm and final reports you must submit. You should be prepared during the course of your grant to keep receipts to document all of the expenses you have made and to later turn in copies of those receipts to the Office of Community Partnerships.

You will also be asked to credit the City of Boston's Safe Neighborhood Youth Fund on all materials used to advertise your project, including brochures, flyers, postcards, and press releases.

What happens if I don't spend all the money I am awarded?

We will ask you to return the portion of the grant you did not spend.

I read your application, and I think I have a good program, but I'm not sure. I don't want to spend a lot of time filing out the application if my idea is inappropriate. What should I do?

Please contact Cuong P. Hoang, the Youth Funds Manager. He can discuss your idea and help you to understand whether SNYF would be an appropriate source for funding.

Three identical workshops will be held to provide information about this grant. Information about the dates, times and location of these workshops is on Page 7 of the Guidelines. Attendance is not required, although it is strongly encouraged.

What factors will be considered when reviewing my proposal?

The review committee will apply the funding criteria on Page 4 of the guidelines.

Specifically, you should think about how your proposed project *enhances* your organization's ability to address at least one of the priority objectives listed in the guidelines.

In some cases, this may be a small project that is part of a larger program or initiative. If so, the bulk of your proposal should describe the project specifically while giving the committee some background on the overall program or initiative. A common mistake that is often made is that people spend too much time describing the overall program while only describing the specific project that will be funded in passing. This does not help the committee understand the impact that SNYF funding will have.

Also, it is important that your budget reflects the project described in your proposal. Often, the committee will read a compelling proposal, but the budget will request items that seem to have no relation to the proposal. In this case, we would not be able to fund the proposal, because we did not understand how your budget request relates to your proposed project.

If you are saying that the budget request should be reflected in the project narrative, what is the purpose of the budget narrative?

While it should be clear from your *project* narrative why you need all of the items described in your budget, your *budget* narrative describes specifically how you have arrived at the dollar values on the Budget Request Form along with a *brief* justification for the expense. A sample budget and narrative are included in the application package.

For example, you may describe in your project narrative the need to increase a staff person from .50 FTE to .80 FTE in order to implement a new project. Then, on the Budget Request Form you request \$6,000 to support this staff person. In your budget narrative, you should state that the staff person's FTE is \$20,000, and that SNYF will be funding only the increase from .50 FTE to .80 FTE, which will amount to \$6,000; you should also state briefly the reason for this increase. Similarly, you may state in your project narrative that you need to purchase additional curricular materials to implement a new math tutoring program. In your budget narrative, you should indicate the name of the curriculum you are purchasing, the cost per curriculum, the number of curriculum packages you will be purchasing, and explain briefly how the curriculum will be used.

Your budget narrative is *not* an opportunity for you to justify the need for expenses on your Budget Request Form. This need should be evident from your narrative. Rather, it is an opportunity for you to explain in detail the exact amount of money you are requesting and whatever calculations you have made in order to arrive at this request total.